Vol. VIII. Numb. 62

THE OBSERVATOR.

On the Defeat of Count Mercy *by the* French, *and the Rejoycing of the Enemies of the Proteſtant Succeſſion upon it. The Uſe that the Empire and the other Confederates ought to make of it. The Elector of* Hannover's *good Conduct not duly ſupported. On the Duke of* Anjou's *circular Letter, reflecting on the Houſe of* Auſtria *as encouraging Hereticks. The Hypocriſy of the* French *Court in that Charge. Our Government may become the Head of the Proteſtants, by following King* William's *Advice in his laſt Speech. What it is that hinders it. On the Oppoſition to the Bill to prevent the Growth of Popery in* Ireland. *On the Siege of* Mons. *The Slackneſs of ſome of the Allies neceſſary to be redreſs'd againſt next Campaign. On the Defeat of the* French *in* Flanders.

From Wednesday, Auguſt 31. to Saturday, September 3. 1709.

Country-m. I AM ſorry, Maſter, that we are diſappointed in our Expectations of the Elector of *Hannover*'s Progreſs into the *French* County, by the Defeat of General *Mercy*'s Detachment; and ſo much the more, becauſe the Enemies of the Proteſtant Succeſſion rejoyce at it.

Obſ. I am ſorry for it too, *Roger*; but we muſt ſubmit to Providence, and have Reaſon to be thankful, that we have met with ſo few Diſaſters, conſidering how ill the Confederates have improv'd the great Advantages which it has pleas'd God to give 'em over the common Enemy. In the mean Time, no Body can blame the Conduct of that Great Prince. Every one muſt own the Deſign was well laid, and in Part well executed; but if Count *Mercy* was guilty of ſo much Precipitancy, as the publick News informs us he was, we ſhall ſoon hear of his being call'd to an Account for it by a Council of War. There's ſo much gain'd however by this Expedition, that the Elector has let the World ſee he is capable of entering the *French* Dominions on that Side, were he du'y ſupported; which we hope will put the Empire upon acting with more Vigor, and to exert their native Strength, without leaving the main Burden of the War upon us and the *Dutch*.

Country-m. Aye, Maſter, and whatever the Enemies of the *Hannover* Family may ſay upon this Diſaſter, I am very well ſatisfy'd they dread that Prince's Conduct, and are ſufficiently convinc'd, that he is able to maintain the Title with Glory, which our Laws have veſted in his Family. His Merit ſhines too bright to be obſcur'd by thoſe Clouds with which his open and ſecret Enemies would eclipſe it. I hope alſo, Maſter, that this Diſaſter will open the Eyes of the Imperial Court, and oblige them to put away that accurs'd Spirit of Jeſuitiſm and Perſecution which obſtructs their Affairs both in *Hungary* and the Empire, and makes them guilty of the ſame Crime, and by Conſequence liable to the ſame Puniſhments, which Heaven is now inflicting upon the Houſe of *Bourbon*, for their Perſecution and Breach of Treaties.

Obſ. You ſay very well, *Roger*; and I hope it may alſo be a Warning to ſome People nearer Home, to beware of the ſame Spirit and Temper; for we ſee by the Account of the Proceedings of the *Iriſh* Parliament, that the Bill to prevent the Growth of Popery, has met with vigorous Oppoſition there, whereas that for impoſing the Sacramental Teſt upon the Diſſenters in that Kingdom, who have been chiefly inſtrumental in ſaving the *Britiſh* Intereſts there, met with no ſuch Rubs. At the ſame Time, I cannot but take Notice of the Diſingenuity and groſs Hypocriſy of the *French* Court, manifeſted in the Duke of *Anjou*'s circular Letter of *July* the 4th, 1709, to the People of *Spain*, where they charge the Houſe of *Auſtria* with Marriages and ſtrict Alliances with Hereticks, to the Prejudice of the Church of *Rome*, when all the World knows, that for above an hundred Years paſt, ever ſince the Reign of King *Henry* the IVth, down to the Revolution, the *French* Court had been in League with Proteſtants, and writ ſtrenuouſly in Defence of that Practice, particularly in a Piece, call'd, *Remarks upon the putting of* Dunkirk *into the Hands of the* Engliſh *in* 1658, inſerted in the ſixth Tome of the Collection of Treaties, printed by the *French* King's Authority at *Paris*, in 1693. There they take Notice of the ſame Objections made by the Houſe of *Auſtria* againſt the Conduct of the preſent *French* King, and his Court, whom they charg'd with ſacrificing the Catholick Religion to Proteſtants: By which we may plainly ſee, *Roger*, that moſt Princes make the Pretext of Religion a mere Stale to cover their Ambition and Uſurpation upon the Rights of Mankind.

Country-m. I perceive it clearly, Maſter, and am firmly perſwaded, by the Conduct of both thoſe Houſes, that what Favour either of 'em have at any Time ſhewn to Proteſtants, proceeded rather from the Neceſſity of their Affairs, than from their Inclination; and I heartily wiſh, that Proteſtant Princes and States had always been acted with the ſame Zeal for Truth, that thoſe Houſes have been inſpir'd with for Error.

Obſ. I wiſh ſo too, *Roger*; but have obſerv'd to you before, that our Government can never act their natural Part of being the civil Head of the Reformation, ſo long as their Hands are ty'd up by a Spirit of Impoſition, and ſuch Laws as make them only Sovereigns of a Party, and hinder them from enjoying the full Service and Aſſiſtance of ſo great a Body of their Subjects as the Diſſenters, and other Proteſtant Intereſts [illegible] *Ireland*, which they would cordially [illegible] vernment, were they allow'd to do ſo by the Laws of *England* and *Ireland*. But inſtead of that generous and neceſſary Diſpoſition we find, by whoſe Influence God knows, the Spirit of Tyranny in Matters of State, and of Impoſition in Matters of Religion, rather gains Ground among us; ſo that thoſe unhappy Controverſies, which ought for ever to be lay'd aſide, are reviv'd with great Fury, under a falſe Pretext of Affection to the Monarchy, and Zeal to the Church of *England*, though thoſe Principles tend to the manifeſt Overthrow of our legal Conſtitution both in Church and State, and viſibly promote that Deiſm, Socinianiſm, and Irreligion, with which the Zealots of High-Church continually allarm the Nation, to cover their own Deſigns of re-introducing Popery and Slavery. Nor will it ever be otherwiſe, 'till thoſe at the Helm of Church and State uſe their utmoſt Endeavours by Law, and a good Adminiſtration, to put in Execution [illegible]'s laſt Speech, or, as we may juſtly call it, *his dying Words* in Execution, and [illegible] *all other Diviſions and Diſtinctions among us, but that of being for the Proteſtant Religion, and the preſent Settlement*, and of being for a Popiſh Prince, *and a* French *Government*; in order to which, 'tis neceſſary,

ſary, that ſuch Laws as hinder the Sovereign to *be a Common Parent to all the Subjects*, as that glorious Prince worded it, ſhould be repeal'd, and all diviſive Practices ſtrictly forbid. I am very certain, *Roger*, that in order to make the Church of *England* what ſhe ought to be, *viz. A Means and Pattern of Union to the Chriſtian World*, ſuch Books as Mr. Serjeant *Hook*'s *Catholiciſm without Popery*, and Sir *Peter King*'s *Enquiry into the Conſtitution, Diſcipline, Unity, and Worſhip of the primitive Church*, ought rather to be conſulted, than the Writings of Dr. *Hicks*, Mr. *Dodwell*, and Mr. *Leſley*'s *Regale and Pontificate*, &c.

Country-m. You have ſaid more on this Subject, than you'll be thank'd for, Maſter; therefore we muſt adjourn it. I am afraid our preſent Temper is ſuch, that we can neither bear the Diſeaſe nor the Cure. You ſee now, that our Deſign to beſiege *Mons*, is confirm'd. Pray what's your Opinion of that Matter?

Obſ. I heartily wiſh Succeſs to the Confederat Arms every where, and hope, if that be intended, it will ſucceed; but ſince our Circumſtances are ſo unhappy, that we muſt play our Dogs at the Bull's Horns, 'tis well we have thoſe that are us'd to the Game. I doubt not but our Generals have very good Reaſons for their Conduct: The taking of that important and ſtrong Town, will ſecure a Barrier on that Side, both to the *Dutch* and *Spaniſh* Provinces, to which the *French* Garriſon of *Mons* has prov'd very troubleſome; and by the Succeſs which God has bleſs'd us with in taking *Liſle*, *Tournay*, &c. which the *French* King did almoſt think impregnable, it may probably incline him to a reaſonable Peace, when he ſees his ſtrong Holds are no Security to him; but if he ſtill prove obſtinate, as the Duke of *Anjou*'s haughty circular Letter ſeems to imply he will, I hope the Allies will concert Meaſures this Winter to attack him next Summer where he lies more open both by Sea and Land, and have all Neceſſaries for doing it in ſuch a Readineſs, as not to let moſt of the Seaſon be ſpent before they begin. I could heartily have wiſh'd the Confederates on the Side of *Savoy* had been in a Condition to take their Winter-Quarters in *Dauphine*, and that no ſuch Diſputes had happen'd betwixt the Imperial Court and that Duke, as have in any Meaſure retarded their Progreſs. I alſo wiſh the Elector of *Hannover* may be better enabl'd to execute his Deſign of entering the *French* Dominions next Summer; and that as *Great Britain* and *Holland* are the Soul of the Confederacy, they may be directed to ſuch Councils and Meaſures, as may invigorate the reſt of the Allies to act their due Part, for bringing this ruinous and expenſive War to a ſpeedy and happy Concluſion; for if we and the *Dutch* be left to the dangerous and difficult Work of attacking ſo many ſtrong Town, as the *French* have ſtill on the Frontiers of the *Netherlands*, while the reſt of the Allies act with ſo little Concert and Vigor, and while the *French* King gains Time to animate and diſcipline his new rais'd Troops, he may in all Probability be able, in another Campaign or two, to have an Army as good as his former Veteranes, that Providence had cut off by the Sword of the Confederates, who, by the Slackneſs and bad Conduct of ſome of their Number, have been depriv'd of the Advantages which they might reaſonably have expected from ſo many glorious Victories, and the *French* King's wretched Circumſtances.

Country-m. Hold, hold, Maſter, here's great and good News all of a Sudden, which I believe will alter the Scheme of our Reaſoning. The *French* Army was decoy'd out of their Lines by our Feint of beſieging *Mons*; but they had better have ſtay'd where they were, for they are ſoundly beaten. Our Detachment that was ſent toward *Mons*, made a quick Turn, and join'd the Confederate Army, who totally routed the *French* on *Wedneſday* laſt. The Duke of *Argile*, a brave *North Britain*, having begun the Attack upon them in the Wood of *Sart*, broke them there; and the Prince of *Orange*, or *Naſſau Friezeland*, having done the like at the Wood of *Sanſart*, thro' which the reſt of our Army advanc'd, the *French* were forc'd from their ſtrong Intrenchments, and ſome of their Cannon, and entirely defeated, our Forces being in Purſuit of the flying Enemy, when the Expreſs came away, of which we may expect the Particulars by the next Mail.

Obſ. Let the Glory be given as it ought, *Roger*, to the Lord God of Hoſts, who is ſtrong in Battel. 'Tis ſo viſibly his own Hand, that Man can claim but little Share in it, conſidering the Precautions the *French* have taken all this Campaign. We are now in a fair Way to ſee the Donwfal of *Lewis* the XIVth's *Babel* of Tyranny; and if the Proteſtant Powers improve this Advantage, they may prevent the World's being peſter'd as hitherto, with the Tyranny and Idolatry of the *Romiſh Babylon*, and her Abettors, the Patrons of arbitrary and perſecuting Principles, in reform'd Countries. The Faction may now conclude their *Te Deum* for the Advantage of the *French* in *Upper Alſace*, with a *de Profundis* for their entire Rout in *Flanders*. The worſt I wiſh thoſe Men, *Roger*, is, their Converſion to better Principles, and more loyal Practices.

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